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Two Spooks Suffer for Shooting Straight

In the higger-mugger world of espionage, playing by the rules can get a man in deep trouble.

This is the story of two "spooks" who worked for Uncle Sam's intelligence agencies. They played by the rules and lost.

Their names are Ed Weimer and Don Jordan. Weimer made the mistake of falling in love; Jordan's error was trying to blow the whistle on improper behavior by his colleagues. Both had worked hard for their intelligence agencies; both had been cited for their excellence over the years. And both eventually lost their jobs. Here are their stories:

Weimer was a 15-year employee of the National Security Agency. His downfall began on his last undercover mission to Vietnam in 1974, when he met and fell in love with a Vietnamese prostitute. Weimer decided he wanted to marry the woman and bring her home with him.

Several months later, when Saigon was about to fall, Weimer tried to arrange his intended bride's entry into the United States. He went by the book, through proper diplomatic channels.

NSA's response was swift and blunt: Weimer's passport was yanked and he was ordered home on the first flight. Officials in Washington made the presumption — without supporting evidence — that Weimer's fiancée must be a spy.

My reporters Indy Badhwar and Judy Grande have studied court documents, now sealed for national security reasons. They show a pattern of deceit and harassment by NSA that drove Weimer literally to drink, and he even considered turning to the Russians for help. "A person less dedicated and with less scruples might well have done that," Weimer said.

NSA officials who tried to help Weimer were, he says, "intimidated" by the agency's Office of Security. Weimer was placed under surveillance, with near-daily counseling and "truth sessions" conducted by NSA security personnel. Weimer cooperated totally with the security officers.

Meanwhile, the court papers say NSA and Central Intelligence Agency operatives were given special help in evacuating their Vietnamese "families" from Saigon. This assistance covered two girlfriends of two CIA officials, both of whom were married.

In contrast, a year after he returned to the United States, Weimer was stripped of his green security badge in front of his colleagues, told to clean out his desk and assigned to non-sensitive duties. His personnel folder was falsified to exclude previous merit awards.

Later, NSA brass convened a secret evaluation board. Without even allowing him to testify, they gave Weimer an ultimatum: give up his Vietnamese

fiancée or his job. With two children by an earlier marriage to support, Weimer reluctantly agreed to NSA's blackmail and agreed to abandon his efforts to bring his fiancée to the United States.

Although he was given back his security clearance, Weimer quit NSA and is now suing the agency on his own for \$10 million in damages.

So much for romance. The case of Don Jordan is more prosaic, but it reveals an equally heavy hand by an intelligence service. Jordan was in the "domestic collections division" of the CIA for 26 years. That's the branch that gathers possibly useful information by debriefing Americans who travel abroad.

Jordan's "crime" was complaining — first confidentially, then publicly — that there was a quota system for officers in his branch and that some of them were fabricating their reports. Jordan refused to fake it, and he learned that his secret personnel dossier — "funny file" — contained derogatory information prepared by a supervisor who had told him to submit false reports.

Jordan went so far as to send a telegram to then-CIA director Stansfield Turner. That got him fired.

Jordan is now suing the CIA over his dismissal. The agency claims that its personnel decisions are beyond the jurisdiction of the courts. A U.S. District Court judge disagrees.